

# CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM.]

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."—Paul.

[PAYABLE AT THE END OF SIX MONTHS.]

VOL. III.

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No. 13.

## Evangelical.

### SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS....No. IX. PART II.

*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, &c.—Matt. xxv. 31—46.*

The inquisitive reader will do well to consider, for a moment, the unwarrantable latitude which is assumed by the advocates for endless misery, in the common explication, (if such it can be called) of the paragraph now under consideration. It is wrested from the connexion in which it was delivered by the Founder of our religion, as recorded by his faithful servant, and is associated with events which were not mentioned, and applied to times that are inconceivably distant from the periods to which the Saviour alluded. To render this point convincing, let us inquire for the circumstance, that called forth our Lord's address to his disciples, of which the 25th chapter of Matthew is but a part, to ascertain which, we must look back to the beginning of the 24th chapter: And it is supposed that most of those who will trouble themselves to read this dissertation, with the attention which its importance demands, have already been apprised, that the Books of the New Testament, were not written with the division of chapters and verses, in which they now appear, that being a modern invention, for the greater convenience in making quotations and references. In some instances the division of chapters is such that, on account of a prevailing inclination to commence the reading of a chapter, as though it necessarily involved a new subject, distinct from that which preceded it, we are liable to misunderstand, what would otherwise be well understood. The observation is probably just, in relation to this 25th chapter of the gospel of Matthew. It begins with an *adverb* of time, which obviously relates to the subject of the *preceding chapter*, and implies a continuance of the *same discourse*; and yet, too many readers are so inattentive, and peruse the scriptures so mechanically, as to overlook that connexion, and begin the chapter, as though it was entirely isolated from the rest of the book. In so doing, there is manifest impropriety. To proceed understandingly, we must run the eye back to the 31 verse of the 24th chapter, which contains certain *questions*, addressed to the Lord Jesus by several disciples, at a private interview concerning the destruction of "the temple," and the signs which were to forebode that memorable event. The only difficulty which we have had to encounter, in fixing on the time for the fulfilment of the several prophecies and declarations of Jesus, in the whole of his answer, including the remaining part of that chapter and the whole of the 25th, was, to be satisfied beyond a remaining doubt, as to the meaning of the interrogatories, proposed for solution. For certainly, nothing could be more incompatible with the character of the divine Teacher, than to suppose his answer was not directly adapted to a fair and full solution of the questions, which were proposed in a serious and earnest manner, by his intimate friends, at a private conference.

The evangelist says, "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" To ascertain the most probable import of the interrogatories, we should critically examine the occasion which elicited them, and the account of the same thing, as related by other sacred historians. The occasion appears to have been as follows. "As Jesus went out and departed from the temple, his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See (or consider) ye not all these things? There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." And

immediately after, "as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came to him, saying, Tell us when shall these things be? That is, *Inform us of the time and circumstances*, of the demolition of this fine City, the pride and glory of the Jewish nation. Any thing essentially different from such a paraphrase, would imply a degree of ignorance in the interrogators, incompatible with their privileges and character. The meaning, extent and limitation of the words, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world," are satisfactorily ascertained, by comparing this relation of the facts, with accounts given of the same, by Mark and Luke, whose testimonies nearly agree in phraseology, and are so unambiguous, as to admit of no misinterpretation. And we consider it proper and safe, in a case like this, where *three evangelists* profess to relate the *same facts*, to suffer the *two*, whose language is unequivocal, to assist in illustrating the meaning of the *one*, whose account is attended with some ambiguity. The questions which certain disciples proposed to Jesus, were these:—"Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled."—Mark xiii. 4. The relation by Luke is the same. "But when shall these things be? and, what sign will there be when these things come to pass."—Luke xxi. 7. The agreement between these two witnesses is such, and the questions are so adapted to the preceding declaration of Jesus concerning the destruction of the temple, that, we have a right to suppose the form of words used by Matthew, expresses the same meaning, and should be understood with the same limitation: Otherwise the evangelists would be at essential variance, when treating on one and the same subject. The reflecting reader is requested to consider, that, neither St. Mark or Luke, in relating the principal facts of the interview between Jesus and his disciples, make any mention of the parables in the 25th chapter; which is presumptive evidence that they are a forcible reduplication of the same truths, which had before been stated. To suppose, as some have, that a part of the Saviour's answer to his inquisitive friends, related to the time and circumstances of the destruction of the temple, which happened *seventeen hundred and fifty years* ago, and the rest of it to a time yet distant and future, unknown to men and angels, and all this without the least intimation that he was speaking of two so vastly distant periods, betrays a degree of credulity, if not superstitious reverence for the opinions of commentators, quite exceptionable, in this day of increasing light and liberal inquiry. We have already seen how Mark and Luke understood the inquiring disciples of Jesus; and propriety demands of us to understand Matthew as expressing nothing essentially different; which being admitted, the inference seems to be unavoidable, that Jesus was replying to these plain questions, viz. When shall this splendid temple be destroyed? and what signs shall we discover, preceding the event? But the unequivocal assertions of Jesus that his discourse related primarily and directly, to events that were soon to happen, would seem to preclude all liability to misinterpret his meaning. Directing the attention of his friends to the 'fig-tree's putting forth its leaves, an invariable sign of the near approach of summer,' he adds with uncommon emphasis, "So likewise ye, when ye shall see *all these things*, KNOW that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." If declarations like this, taken in connexion with the inquiry, "Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign, when these things shall be fulfilled," can be fairly interpreted in reference to a period yet future, we see not, why the laws of nature may not be violated, and the expanding fig-leaves, indicate that summer is infinitely distant! In reply to the *learned conjectures* of some commentators, that our Lord lost sight of the principal theme of his discourse, at the 36th

verse of the 24th chapter, and began to speak of the *future judgment*, it may well be observed—it is more probable that those learned men lost sight of the Saviour's close adherence to the subject of his discourse, than that the unerring Teacher lost sight of his own subject. Jesus pursued a direct course; and those who follow his example, and explain all doubtful expressions and phrases, with reference to the principal theme of his answer, will not be likely to mislead in any essential point of doctrine.

We have been thus particular and careful, in explaining the connexion between the chapter in which the parable of the sheep and goats is recorded, and the 24th, that every attentive and discerning reader may discover, the *manifest impropriety* of applying any part of the discourse to the *resurrection state*. This is a point which needs to be settled, beyond a serious doubt, before we can be supposed to possess requisite freedom, in examining comments directly illustrative of the parable before us. After we are satisfied that the Lord Jesus was not discoursing on the future, immortal state of men, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal is clothed with immortality, attempts at rational explanation, will not appear so unpromising. To prepare the way for the more interesting part of this illustration, we shall next offer a few words, in *defining the meaning* of certain phrases, that are liable to be misunderstood.

## Polemical.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

### INFINITY OF SIN.

MR. EDITOR—My opponent, who has assumed the signature of T. writes, I apprehend, more for amusement, than from an expectation of defending the proper infinity of sin, or of making converts to his opinions. His last article certainly contains but few things if any, which merit a reply. If however, you think the following remarks will be of any use to the readers of the *Intelligencer*, you are at liberty to insert them. The word *infinite*, in the last clause of Job xxii. 5, "T" admits "is to be taken in a limited or qualified sense." He then contends that the term *great*, in the first clause, implies "*infinity* in the most literal and unqualified sense of the expression." Now that this contention is void of truth and propriety will appear evident from the following argument. The nature of sin is opposed, so far as it extends, to the nature of God. But that there should be two infinite natures, the one in direct opposition to the other, is a literal impossibility. The nature of God is literally infinite, the nature of sin therefore cannot be infinite. But according to the groundless assertion of this writer, the nature of sin is *equal* to that of Jehovah, "in the most literal and unqualified sense of the expression!" Now to say nothing of its impropriety, the idea is truly shocking! But what authority has T. for making the word *great*, in the above passage, synonymous with *infinite* in its proper acceptation? None most certainly from the context. But he says, we understand by the word *great*, when applied to God, proper infinitude. It has not however, this meaning from its natural force; but from the acknowledged infinity of the divine Being; and it certainly does not follow, that *great* must have the same immeasurable import, when applied to a subject opposite in its nature, and infinitely disproportioned to God. My opponent must have been very thoroughly disciplined, in the school of orthodoxy, or he never would deliberately contend, that sin can justly claim a *greatness equal* to the nature of God Almighty!! T's Herculean argument from the coincidence of scripture with right reason, will not, as he imagines, "bear the test of sound logic," because the premises from which he draws his conclusion, is wholly an assumed one. That sin is infinite, has not as yet, "been demonstrated from rea-



son," unless we admit, which we do not, that an antique sophism is logical demonstration.

With the superannuated argument, with which my opponent closes his last article, your readers, at least many of them, are doubtless as familiar as he is. But as though it were new and overwhelming, he is cautious not to send it among them without a suitable guard. Its force, if it possess any, is effectually held in check by two *ifs*, either of which has as much claim to infinity, as the subject about which he is writing. The most that it amounts to is, that sin *would* be infinite, *if* it were not finite. "The greatness of sin," he says, "consists in the greatness of the evil designed by the will." We may then inquire, Is the *will of man* infinite? Certainly not. Can a finite will form infinite designs? Surely not. No evil then, designed by the will of man, is infinite. 'Tis argument of course falls to the ground. But that Job ever designed, or desired the destruction of God, is a slanderous assertion, without the shadow of proof. It is a direct libel upon his history, as drawn by the pen of inspiration. That any other person, with correct views of the adorable Jehovah, ever desired his destruction is not at all probable. We have no competent evidence of the fact. And if any one, through ignorance of the nature, character, and purposes of the Deity, ever for a moment, wished his annihilation, it was by attaching to him, ideally, qualities which do not belong to him, and therefore, the God, whose destruction he desired, was in reality no God, but a phantom of the imagination, which ought to be, and which inevitably will be destroyed by the influence of truth upon the mind. To desire the destruction of any God, except the living and true God, "who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works, and endure forever," is so far from being an infinite evil, that it is in fact, no evil at all, but a pure dictate of wisdom and piety. But as the infinite sin, for which my opponent contends, is extremely harmless, having no power to destroy God, his moral government, nor a single purpose of his infinite "love and kindness towards man," I shall probably occupy no more of your paper on this subject.

S. S.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

#### "INFINITY OF SIN."

MR. STREETER—Your correspondent "S. S." in his reply in your last paper, to my communication of the 27th of Sept. complains of an unintentional mistake into which I had fallen. He is correct; and having been convicted of error, I cheerfully retract it. My mistake however, was far from affecting the question at issue between us, as it related to some examples which he had chosen for the purpose of refuting a conclusion which some opponents of Universalism, he assures us, have drawn to the disadvantage of its advocates and professors.

Having made this concession, I trust, I shall find "S. S." equally candid in acknowledging in his turn, that he has represented me as making use of an argument, which properly speaking, is his own. For the correctness of his remark, that "there may be propriety in this argument, but that at present he is unable to discover it," I most cheerfully subscribe. But your correspondent should remember that these shafts are levelled against himself, and that the reasoning he labors so successfully to refute, is his own. He maintained, in a former communication, that because sin was the act of a *finite* being, it could not be an infinite evil. To this argument he represents me as opposing another, viz: "If sin cannot be infinite because committed by a finite being, it cannot be a finite evil because committed against an infinite being. I observed at the same time that agreeably to a maxim in philosophy this kind of reasoning, by proving *too much*, proved *nothing*. Now Mr. Editor, it is evident, that I did not "oppose" the above reasoning to the argument of "S. S." I but followed up his own proposition, to show to what consequences it would lead. As the *premises* were his, so also were the *consequences* of which he has with such generosity made me a present. I must however decline accepting them. The example he produces of the conversation between two statesmen, tends still farther to the refutation of his own reasoning. In exulting, therefore, as he does, towards the conclusion of the paragraph he has unfortunately sung *Te deum* before achieving the victory. It is not therefore *I*, but *he*, who "sweeps away difficulties at a single stroke." His argument like a two-edged sword assails both friend and foe, and refutes both orthodoxy and heterodoxy at the same time. According to his reasoning sin is neither *finite* nor *infinite*. What is it then? I should be obliged to my opponent to furnish me with the necessary information. His reasoning leads to the discovery of a new grade in the order of things.

In the succeeding paragraph "S. S." rejoins to my reply to his second argument, that sin is not infinite because exceeded by grace. In support of his proposition, the words of

the apostle were cited: "Where sin abounded grace might much more abound. To his conclusion drawn from the above passage, I observed that the inspired writer in the passage alluded to, speaks of the *extension* of sin, and not of its *nature*, and is therefore cited to no purpose. He replies, "It is not true that the apostle alludes *exclusively* to the extension of sin," and in support of his assertion he cites the whole of the passage under consideration. Now Mr. Editor, *I never said*, that the apostle alluded *exclusively* to the extension of sin.—I said, indeed, that he referred to its extension; but I did not say to its extension alone. I said that no reference was made by the apostle to its nature, and I should have added, or to its real character. And that he did refer to either of them, my opponent has not attempted to prove. I therefore not only re-assert but have proved that the passage is cited by my adversary to no purpose. The *character* of a thing forms one subject, and its *prevalence* or *extension* another. In treating of the one, we should not make a digression to the other. The character of the plague or the yellow fever, and the number of persons who have fallen victims to their malignity, are two distinct things, and should not be confounded together. If professing to treat of the causes to which either of those diseases owe their existence, a writer should spend his time in computing the number of persons who have died of them, he would do little towards arresting their progress.

"Infinity," says he, "is not such an elastic thing as T. would seem to intimate." What "intimation" of the kind, Mr. Editor, is to be found in any of my remarks upon the subject? Or how can such a conclusion be drawn from any premises laid down by me?

In reply to his third argument, that "sin is not infinite, because it can be effectually done away," I observed, "my opponent should have considered in what sense, sin is said to be infinite." S. S. rejoins, by observing, that he contends that "sin is not infinite in the proper sense of infinity." On this observation the following reflections present themselves to my mind. 1. The question is not what sense S. S. attaches to the term, but *what* are the sentiments of his opponents respecting it. A writer who undertakes to refute the opinions advanced by others, should first ascertain what those opinions are, otherwise he may discover when it is too late, that all his time has been spent to no purpose; that he has been combating a shadow instead of a substance. No man has a right to manufacture creeds or opinions for another. 2dly. When we speak of the "infinity of sin," we refer not to *words*, but to *ideas*, as when we speak of the goodness of God, for example, his holiness, mercy, justice, &c. Now to an idea, several constructions may be frequently given, and when it refers to the character of a thing, we are led to inquire, whether that thing possesses such a character in itself, or whether the character is an acquired one. Thus when we say, *man is depraved and sinful*, the question is, whether he is such by nature, or by habit. "But," continues "S. S." "in every sense in which sin can properly be said to be infinite, it is as likely to take away the Lamb of God as to be taken away by him." Such is the *assertion* of my opponent. Let us test its correctness by a parallel example, "S. S." has incurred a heavy debt which he is unable to pay, without the assistance of another. A kind friend furnishes him with the necessary sum. Would he, under such circumstances, say with propriety, The claim my creditor has upon me is as likely to prevent the payment of my debts, as the payment of the amount now in my possession is likely to "take away" that claim or destroy it? Certainly not. For every creditor, however avaricious or unjust he may be, is compelled to cancel his bond when he finds that his debtor has a claim upon him to the full amount of it. If an unjust creditor would do this, might we not expect that a creditor who is strictly just would do the same, under similar circumstances? Now to the justice of a God, who is infinitely just, both S. S. and I are debtors. We are both sinners. We have both abused infinite goodness, and thereby incurred a debt to infinite justice, and rendered ourselves deserving an infinite punishment. A Saviour is appointed to offer to that justice an atonement proportioned to the outrage committed upon that goodness, and by accepting the terms on which the benefits of that atonement are offered us, we may secure our salvation, and obtain an interest in the blood of that "Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world."

In his concluding paragraph, my opponent anticipates another victory, which like his former triumph, must terminate in his defeat. In a word, as he has been already proved to be at variance with *himself*, so also is he anxious to prove that I am at variance with *myself*. "T." he assures us, "with a single dash of his pen, overturns all he has written, by acknowledging that sin is not infinite. T. says, Sin is not an infinite evil in itself, because it must be in that case an eternal evil." Now, Mr. Editor, what proposition have I retracted in the foregoing remarks cited by S. S.? Have I ever said that sin is infinite in itself? Have I intimated as much? Let my opponent point out the passage if he can do it. But I have asserted and proved that sin may become infinite by accident, which formed a different proposition. Probably aware of the weakness of his cause, my opponent endeavors to support his arguments by another broad and unqualified assertion. "It is evident from T's concession that sin to become infinite must go out of itself." He might assert with equal propriety that an action to become evil, to use his own phraseology, "must go out of itself." The mistake of mine, in a former communication, my opponent appears to be of opinion, has given him a right to retaliate upon me by making similar mistakes himself, which he has repeatedly done. In reply to my argument, than an action may be one thing in itself, and another by accident, S. S. observes, "What-

ever actions may become by accident, finitude does not, and cannot by accident become infinity." If by this proposition, S. S. means to intimate that what is finite in itself cannot become infinite by accident, the reply is, that to such a declaration an answer has been already made which he has labored to refute, but in vain.

Should my opponent think proper to pursue this controversy, he will not find me backward in repelling his attacks upon the doctrine I have defended. He has himself thrown the gauntlet. He has himself sought the combat.

Respectfully yours,

T.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

#### A LETTER.

From an elder to a younger Brother, who is preparing for the Ministry, at Bangor Institution.

DEAR BROTHER—The reception of your interesting letter is gratefully acknowledged. You will pardon me when I tell you that our minds are so differently constituted that it seems almost impossible we should think alike in all respects. The Calvinistic sentiments which were contained in your letter, were such as I have long labored in vain to believe. Urged on by a train of motives, too groundless to be mentioned; motives which it is to be feared the pride and inconstancy of the human heart too often give way to; I have frequently been led to an acquiescence in such principles, without the influence of reason or the testimony of the scriptures. Indeed, I have even strove to defend such tenets. But, alas! I was then smiting against the truth as with the "fist of wickedness."

Notwithstanding we differ in a few matters of opinion, I have the satisfaction of believing that we agree in many great and important truths. Though skeptics and infidels may sneer at the christian's hope, and laugh at the terrors of an hereafter, though philosophy and reason could never demonstrate the certainty of a future existence; yet we believe in the resurrection of God's only begotten son, who "has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel;" who has dissipated the "blackness of darkness which enveloped the repositories of the dead;" and who has emitted a ray of light to cheer the pilgrim's way through the "dark valley of the shadow of death." We believe that the Bible is a revelation from God; that this angel of light inculcates no sentiments, but such as are sanctioned by the court of Heaven, and the Judge of the earth. We believe in one eternal unchangeable God, possessing every possible perfection, who is supremely happy in himself; that his attributes are infinite Wisdom, unbounded Goodness, strict Justice and Almighty Power. Such is the Being then in whom we believe; in whom we trust. Were there a lack of any one of these attributes in Deity, where would be our safety? Were he unwise, what bitter consequences of his folly might we not expect to reap? Were he unmerciful, how might we expect to groan beneath the lashes of his enkindled wrath? Were he unjust, what blame could be attached to us were we like Him; and were He like us, what acts of cruelty and injustice would he not do? Were he unable to uphold the works of his hands, how could we be safe "amid the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds." A God destitute of all or any of these perfections, we could not trust; we could not love. We could not rejoice in his government nor swear allegiance to his throne. How grateful then ought we to be, that we have irrefragable evidence that the God whom we worship possesses all these attributes, which alone render him worthy of implicit confidence and deferential homage? With what transport do we see his wisdom employed in devising plans which shall terminate in the best good of his intelligent creation? Unless we are designedly prejudiced against our own happiness, we must perceive that his wisdom will dictate no plan but such as his goodness and justice will approve; and that whatever his wisdom dictates, his power will effectually carry into execution. How ought our hearts to soften with gratitude when we contemplate the happiness that awaits us in the final issue of the scheme of redemption? "O! the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out?" This from your friend and brother.

W—p, Oct. 23, 1823.

JUVENIS.



## INGRATITUDE.

Among all evils there are none worse than those arising from religious contentions. A few months since, this section of our country was in a state of religious jargon and contention. Presbyterians were arrayed against Methodists; Episcopalians were contending against Calvinists; and Calvinists were anxious to return the compliment. Baptists were against the Armenians, and they against the Baptists! In short, every man's hand was against his neighbour, and to the uninterested beholder, the whole presented a scene of bloodless warfare. But no sooner was the trumpet of the gospel of peace on earth, good will to men, sounded in their ears, than the weapons of their warfare were grounded, and one would have been led to suppose their spears were beat into pruning-hooks! But, O, the ingratitude of the human heart! Forgetful of the cause of their quietness, they no sooner had time to recover their strength, than the tocsin of war was sounded around the standard of "endless wretchedness," and the whole multitude were united, and yet continue to bite the hand that fed them, and rail against those that brought them peace, and imprecate with vilest abuse their friends, the Universalists! *N. Y. Gospel Advocate*

## CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

PORTLAND, SATURDAY, NOV. 3, 1823.

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

## OBSERVATIONS ON CONTROVERSY.

On the friendly controversy between our esteemed correspondents, "S. S." and "T." we consider it proper to offer a few remarks; not, however, to take any part in the dispute, but to prevent it from running to unreasonable lengths, or exhausting the patience of the reader by altercation, foreign to the main point at issue. The question, Is sin an infinite evil? is truly important, and in its solution we are all deeply interested. We rejoice at seeing the subject treated in a candid and dispassionate manner. But to prevent prolixity, we would remind friend "T." that as he commenced writing in reply to what his opponent had advanced, he should either use the same words and phrases, in the same acceptation, in which he had employed them, or distinctly notify him of using them in another sense. This would prevent confusion and prolixity in writing. We think the generous disputants will admit, that, if sin is infinite in any sense, its infinity is either acquired, from the Being of whose goodness it is an abuse; or, it is so in itself, being an intention to do infinite mischief; or, that it is reputed as such, on account of the consequences which follow it; or, it becomes infinite, by an accidental change, equal to our change from mortal, to immortal, or from finite to infinite. Now unless the advocate for sin's infinity undertakes to maintain one of the above points, and that by scripture and reason, or scriptures reasonably applied, he can hardly be considered the antagonist of "S. S." because, at least, they embrace all which he meant to oppose. We hope not to be misunderstood, when we ask our friends to bring every argument to bear directly on the point at issue, the infinity of sin, and not the imperfections of each other. Indeed, the remark seems to be unseasonable, since "S. S." appears to have discovered that his opponent was writing on questions rather foreign to the principal point in dispute, and has concluded not to rejoin, unless, peradventure, to explain more fully, what has been misunderstood.

For the consideration of those, who wish to write on controversial subjects, we offer the following rules.

1. Study to obtain clear and distinct ideas of the points on which the disputed doctrines must turn, and arrange the arguments, so as to give them a direct bearing on those points.
2. After having maintained or defended one point of doctrine, necessarily connected with others which are to follow, never throw in any occasional observations by which the attention may be improperly diverted from the main points at issue, on which it should be uninterruptedly fastened.
3. Never magnify unessential errors, nor multiply words on an unhappy expression, of an opponent, which does not materially affect the real subject in dispute; but allow the most favourable construction to be the probable meaning of the writer.

By a due observance of these remarks, prolixity and redundancy would be avoided, in most instances.

Though controversial articles will occupy a suitable part of our columns, we shall be under the necessity of limiting the province of writers, who correspond through this medium, that it may not be crowded with mere fruits of ingenuity, and imagination, instead of arguments. In the admission or rejection of communications, we promise impartiality, to the extent of our ability. In making alterations in a manuscript, we shall co-operate, for the moment, with the writer, and give the just force and cogency of his arguments. When two articles are compressed into one, they will be faithfully and frequently compared, and no argument or observation be stricken from one, which is not embraced in the other. We hope to give no just reason for complaint.

## THE TRACT SERMON—AGAIN.

The despicable pamphlet which we noticed in our paper of Oct. 11, purporting to be a Sermon preached by some Universalist, is industriously circulated in various parts of the country. An edition of it is said to have been issued from the press of Mr. GLEASON, of Hartford, (Conn.) for a despicable fellow by the name of KENDRICK, a zealous missionary. The tract is distributed in America, (N.Y.) by the *Des. Joel Osborn*, of the orthodox stamp. "T. H. MILLER, of Portsmouth, (N. H.) keeps constantly on hand at very reduced prices," some of each edition. He printed the pamphlet at first, though he says, he always considered it a mean, worthless production, and did not suppose any one would be so foolish as to suppose it was written by a Universalist. Hence, he must have all the honor resulting from its publication. We are happy in being informed that the most respectable Calvinists in this town, hold the tract in utter contempt, and on having it presented them, commit it to the flames. There is one Hobb-ling member, however, who encourages the perusal of it, asserting it to have been written in Portland, by a zealous Universalist. Such "busy bodies" are unworthy our notice. None, excepting those who are wholly unacquainted with our principles, will believe that the mean and contemptible production alluded to, was ever countenanced by a real Universalist. Though as a whole, nothing like it can be produced from the pen of any of our order, yet, in the second edition there are some observations, especially on the 4th page, which in a detached sense, are not objectionable. Take it together, it is a wicked, bungling counterfeit of divine truth.

From the Gospel Palladium.

## MOTHER OF GOD.

An emigrant priest taught the French language to several young persons, whom he attended at their parents houses. Two of my children were under his tuition; one of them a daughter, about fifteen. With her, after her exercise was over, he would sit and chat an hour. Religion was a frequent topic with them, as Monsieur was a fervid Catholic, and my daughter a thorough paced Unitarian: I was often amused with their conversation, even when I had no part in it. The gentleman often had occasion to mention Mary, the mother of Jesus, but he never called her by that scripture title; on the contrary, he always called her the *holy Virgin Mary, Mother of my God*.

One morning, as I sat writing in a distant part of the room, I heard the following conversation between them: "You say, Mr. C. that the Virgin Mary is the mother of your god." "Yes, Mademoiselle, she be so." "By your God, I suppose you mean Jesus Christ, who you say, is God Almighty." "Yes, Mademoiselle, Jesus Christ be God Almighty." "Pray, Sir, who is the Virgin Mary's mother?" "St. Ann, Mademoiselle, St. Ann be the Virgin Mary's mother." "Then Sir, I suppose, that St. Ann is God Almighty's grand-mother." The poor priest blushed, paused, and was evidently confused; he recovered himself, and replied, "As man, Mademoiselle, St. Ann be the grand-mother of Jesus Christ." "If so, sir, then I suppose that St. Mary is the mother only of the man Christ Jesus, and not the mother of God, otherwise St. Ann must be God Almighty's grand-mother." Another pause of visible confusion followed. At last the gentleman exclaimed, "O, Mademoiselle, my good mother, the holy Catholic church, do say that the holy Virgin Mary be the mother of God; but she does not allow us to say, that St. Ann be the grand-mother of God." "Sir, my father has taught me, that no church has authority to teach what is not taught in the Scriptures." "Ah, Mademoiselle, your father be one very good man, I do love him very much, but he be in very great dangerous errors. I do pray to the holy mother of my God, that he be convinced of his great errors." "Sir, I have no doubt but that my father is much obliged to you for your charitable prayers, for I have heard him say, that charity always

edifies him; but that he expects solid argument for the conviction of his mind." The priest hastily arose, and saying, "Bonjour, Mademoiselle, bonjour," and retired.

I cannot help noticing that truly protestant maxim, that "the Bible, the Bible only," is the religion of protestants." This maxim fully imbibed, gave to this intelligent child, the advantage over an aged and zealous Catholic priest.

The Franklin Association of Universalists convened at Whitingham, (Vt.) on the 24th of Sept. last. Brs. H. Ballou, D. Ballou, H. Sampson, J. Brooks, H. Ballou 2d, and H. H. Winchester, were present. The Association adjourned to meet in Bernardstown, (Mass.) October 3, 1824.

The Editor would hereby inform his friends that he has removed from King-street to the house in Willow-street, recently occupied by Major DAVID BRADISH.

## DEDICATIONS AND ORDINATION.

The new UNIVERSALIST CHURCH, in Philadelphia, (Penn.) was dedicated to the service of Almighty God, October 17th, in the presence of a numerous and attentive auditory. Br. ABNER KNEELAND officiated on the occasion. In the evening, a Sermon was delivered by Br. Morse.

Through Divine goodness, the Universalist Society in Bernardstown, (Mass.) have erected a neat and commodious edifice, which was Dedicated, Oct. 7, to religious purposes. Br. DAVID BALLOU made the Dedicatory prayer, and Br. JOHN BROOKS delivered the Sermon, from these very appropriate words; "But I say unto you, in this place is One greater than the temple." Matt. xii. 6.

In the afternoon, Br. Brooks was ordained to the work of the ministry of reconciliation. Br. H. H. WINCHESTER delivered the discourse from the following admirably adapted text:—"I have more understanding than all thy teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation." Psalm cxix. 99. Charge and delivery of the Scriptures by Br. D. Ballou and Right-hand of fellowship, by Br. Winchester. The auditors were numerous, and from their devout attention, evinced their deep interest, in the appropriate solemnities of the day. [Relig. Inquirer.]

## MARRIED.

In this town, by Elder Rand, Mr. Joshua Y. Atkins, to Miss Amelia Alden, of Northport.

On Peaks' Island, (in this town) on Tuesday evening last, by Rev. Mr. Streeter, Mr. Nathaniel Sargent Millett, to Miss Eliza Sawyer Reed.

In Falmouth, by S. Leighton, Jr. Esq. Mr. Joseph Porter, Jr. of Freeport, to Miss Eliza Huston, of the former place.

In Harpswell, by A. Coombs, Esq. Mr. Samuel Hopkins, of Bowdoin, to Miss Abigail, daughter of Capt. P. Raymond.

In Camden, Mr. E. G. Hewett, to Miss Dianah B. Spring.

In Lubec, Mr. Henry Foster, to Miss Ann Moran.

In Wiscasset, Mr. Thomas Gove, to Miss Mary Young.

In Bangor, Mr. Jacob Haskell, to Miss Mary Ann Clark.

In Sedgwick, Joseph Norris, Esq. to Miss Patience Carter.

In Boston, Mr. Cornelius Bird, formerly of this town, to Mrs. Hannah Clafflin, of Boston.

## DIED.

In this town, Capt. Joshua Rogers, aged 65. Mr. Stephen M'Lellan, aged 60. Capt. David Cook, aged 72, a brave officer of the revolution. Mary, child of Mr. Joseph Foye, aged 2 years. A child of Mr. Horace Seaver, aged 18 months.

Frances, daughter of Capt. Alexander Hubbs, aged 3 years. In Kennebunk-Port, Capt. Abner Perkins, aged 67. Rev. George Payson, formerly Pastor of the Congregational Church in that place.

In Andover, Me. Oct. 4, Rev. John Strickland, in the 64th year of his age, and 56th of his ministry.

In Bath, Mr. Gardiner Brown, Jr. aged 21.

In Wiscasset, Mrs. Hannah, wife of Capt. Daniel Baker, 52.

In Hallowell, Mrs. Jane, wife of Mr. Thomas Davis, 56.

In Readfield, Mr. Peter Hunton, aged 82.

In Winthrop, Mrs. Mary, wife of Mr. Samuel Richards, aged 39.

In Mercer, Mrs. Margaret, wife of Mr. Jacob Works, aged 73, formerly of Oxford, Mass.

In Portsmouth, Maj. David C. Foster, aged 31, Junior Editor of the N. H. Gazette. Thus rests from his labors one who was endeared to a numerous acquaintance, and who strengthened the ties of nature by the bonds of friendship and brotherly love.

In Reading, (Vt.) Rosalia Marcella, daughter of Mr. Asa Amsden, in her fifth year.

## FOR SALE AT THIS OFFICE,

A few copies of the "Christian Intelligencer," volumes 1 and 2, bound together or separate.

A few copies of "NOTES ON THE PARABLES," by HOSEA BALLOU.

A SERMON on the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

A SERMON on the Marriage of the King's Son.

A SERMON on the "Spring Season of the Gospel," by Rev. Dolphus Skinner, of Langdon, N. H.

A volume of SERMONS, by Rev. Hosea Ballou.

And a number of other Pamphlets, favoring the doctrine of Universal Salvation.



## POETRY.

## SATURDAY NIGHT.

Sweet to the soul the parting ray,  
Which ushers placid evening in;  
When with the still expiring day,  
The Sabbath's peaceful hours begin—  
How grateful to the anxious breast,  
The sacred hours of holy rest!

I love the blush of vernal bloom,  
When morning gilds night's sullen tear;  
And dear to me the mournful gloom  
Of autumn, Sabbath of the year;  
But purer pleasures, joys sublime,  
Await the dawn of holy time.

Hush'd is the tumult of the day,  
And worldly cares, and business cease,  
While soft the vesper breezes play,  
To hymn the glad return of peace—  
O season blest! O moments given,  
To turn the vagrant thoughts to heaven!

What though, involv'd in lucid night,  
The loveliest forms in nature fade;  
Yet mid the gloom shall heavenly light,  
With joy the contrite heart pervade.  
O then, great source of light divine,  
With beams ethereal gladden mine.

Oft as this hallowed hour shall come,  
O raise my thoughts from earthly things,  
And bear them to my heavenly home,  
On living faith's immortal wings—  
Till the last gleam of life decay,  
In one ETERNAL SABBATH DAY!

FOR THE CHRISTIAN INTELLIGENCER.

## THE CHRISTIAN OPITULATOR.....No. X.

What is the true signification of the word HELL?

Acts ii. 31, "He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ; that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption." The word, rendered hell in this passage is *Hades*, and signifies the literal grave. We remarked on this passage before, in Psalms xvi. 10.

James iii. 6, "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth our whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell." If we were called upon to prove, from this text a place of everlasting fire, we should instead of taking up the word "hell" pitch upon the "tongue," for there is nothing intimated in the text which goes to locate or describe hell; whereas the "tongue" is described as a fire, a world of iniquity! Hell, here signifies those vile and inflammatory passions, which scatter from the tongue, mischief, discord and ruin.

2 Peter ii. 4, "For if God spared not the angels, that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them down into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment" &c. It is not our design, neither was it our promise, originally, to give a full explanation of every text quoted, in which the word hell is found, but only to examine to see whether any thing connected with that word, necessarily gives us to understand by it a place in the eternal world, instituted for the purpose of tormenting the spirits of men eternally. Do you, friendly reader, see any thing here, which goes to prove hell to signify such a place? Please review the text. After being cast down to hell, they were delivered into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment; but does all this prove that hell signifies a place in another world, in which the finally impenitent, must be eternally punished? It does not, by any means. The angels were confined, not indeed, to receive punishment, but to be reserved, until the period of trial should arrive. Now, it would be contrary to all judicial proceedings, and contrary to justice, to punish a man for crimes, before he had his trial to determine his criminality. The word, translated hell in this text is Greek *tartaros*—Latin *tartarus*, and signifies any dark or gloomy place in nature; as a subterranean cavern, &c.

It is used in this text, (and this is the only place in which it is to be found in the scriptures) in a highly figurative sense; but by no means can refer us to a situation after death, instituted as the place of eter-

nal punishment. For ourselves, we do not believe the account is literal. We do not think that either the angels, the hell or the chains are intended to be represented as literal. A more consistent understanding than that may be given, which would relieve the account from certain contradictory ideas, that it must involve, if it be taken literally.

Rev. i. 18, "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore, amen, and have the keys of hell and death." The original word, recorded here, is *hades*. Hades and death are very proper terms to be used in conjunction, as the existence of one naturally implies the other also. Christ is, beautifully, said to have the keys of the grave and of death; because he, who once lived, was dead, but arose from "hell," (in which his "body was not suffered to see corruption") and now "liveth forevermore." Yes, he shall unlock the grave of every sleeping mortal, and at his command we shall come forth. They too, who once lived, and were dead, shall arise from *hades*, and live forevermore in Christ the first fruits; in which "all shall be made alive," and who is "the head of every man."

Rev. vi. 8, "And I looked, and beheld a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was death; and hell followed with him; and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth to kill with the sword, and with hunger and with dearth and with beasts of the earth." Here, death and hell, being commissioned to take away the natural lives of a "fourth part of the earth," by means of the sword, hunger, dearth, and beasts of the earth, we presume that, no one would wish to intimate that the hell was described as a place of eternal punishment. The original word is the same as in the last passage, standing for the grave, but figuratively used.

Rev. xx. 13, "And the sea gave up the dead, which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead, which were in them, and they were judged every man according to his works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire."

It must be obvious to every one that, inasmuch as that, which is destroyed cannot exist eternally, the hell here mentioned cannot signify, what it is commonly supposed to denote, as we find in this place, an account of its destruction. The original word is *hades*. We have now noticed every passage, in our English translation of the Bible, wherein the word hell is found, and we are able to find not one solitary instance in support of the popular notion concerning it. The common opinion is and must be erroneous. Hell never does signify a place in another state of existence, for the eternal punishment of mankind. The whole number of passages, in which this word is found, and which we have quoted, is forty-five. The following are the books, in which it is found, viz.: Deut. once, 2 Sam. once, Job twice, Psalms six times, Prov. seven, Isa. five, Ezek. twice, Amos once, Jonah once, Hab. once, Matt. eight, Mark once, Luke three, Acts once, Jas. once, 2 Pet. once, Rev. three. And the following are the books in which this word is not found, viz.: Gen. Ex. Lev. Num. Josh. Judg. Ruth, 1st Sam. 1 and 2 Kings, Chron. Ezra, Neh. Esther, Eccl. Canticles, Jer. Lam. Dan. Hosea, Joel, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Zeph. Haggai, Zech. Mal. It is not found in St. John's gospel, Rom. 1 & 2 Cor. Gal. Eph. Phillip. Col. 1 & 2 Thess. 1 & 1 Tim. Tit. Phil. Heb. 1st Pet. 1, 2 and 3 John, or in Jude. In our next, we shall conclude this examination; when, if we have opportunity, we propose to notice some passages, which are rendered differently, from the same words which have in other places been translated, HELL.

ORIGEN.

BY ALBION K. PARRIS,  
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MAINE:  
A PROCLAMATION

For a Day of Public Thanksgiving &amp; Praise.

THE voice of civil authority can never be more beneficially, nor more honorably employed than in echoing the commands of that Legislator, whose dominion is universal and supreme, and from whom all authority is derived. If it may ever speak with confidence, if it may ever claim to be regarded, it is when inculcating duties which He has enjoined. As He has made it the duty of His rational creatures "to enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise," a compliance with the custom, long since established by our ancestors, of

appointing a day annually for the public and united performance of this duty, cannot need either warrant or apology. We cannot, indeed expect to discharge in a day, the debt of gratitude which is due for the mercies of a year. The favors which we daily receive as individuals, demand daily thankful returns. But as the members of a civil community compose one political body united by various ties, and as they are indebted to Him, on whom nations, no less than individuals depend, for many blessings in which they have a common interest; it seems highly proper that they should occasionally unite in more public and solemn acknowledgments of His goodness.

I have, therefore, thought fit to appoint, and with the advice of the Council, do hereby appoint THURSDAY, the twentieth day of November next, to be observed by the inhabitants of this State, as a Day of Public Thanksgiving and Praise. And they are requested to assemble on that day in their respective places of religious worship, that we may, with united and grateful hearts "give unto God the glory which is due to His Name," and acknowledge in a suitable manner, the unnumbered mercies which He has bestowed on us the past year.

In the name of that "One Mediator" through whom all our blessings flow, let us offer him our most hearty thanks, that while the dispensations of His Providence during this period have been strikingly adapted to convince us of our entire dependence on His sovereign will, and of the ease with which he can strip us of all our possessions; they no less clearly exhibit His unwillingness to exert His power for that purpose, and His readiness "in the midst of wrath" to "remember mercy;" that though His afflicting hand has fallen heavily on some portions of this State with whose suffering inhabitants it becomes us affectionately to sympathize, the State at large has been preserved from desolating calamities; that when conflagration was spreading on the wings of the wind and threatening wide devastation, He was pleased to arrest its progress, and to incline many, not only in this State, but in our sister states to contribute liberally for the relief of the sufferers; that though the labors of the husbandman have been less abundantly rewarded than in some former years, He has granted us a sufficiency of the fruits of the earth, and smiled upon our Commerce, Manufactures and Fisheries;—that our civil rights and privileges remain unimpaired, and our Literary Institutions continue to flourish; and above all, that we are still permitted to enjoy the inestimable blessings of the Gospel; that so many exertions have been made to impart these blessings to our destitute fellow creatures, and that He has been pleased to crown these exertions with such a measure of success.

And as He requires us to unite confession and supplication with our thanksgivings, let us while gratefully acknowledging these undeserved favors, penitently confess our own abuse of them, together with the other numberless offences, which have justly provoked him to withhold from us still greater blessings, and beseech Him for the sake of His Son, to pardon our transgressions, and turn us from our iniquities; to remember in mercy those of our fellow-citizens whom He has afflicted; to grant us the continued enjoyment of those civil, literary and religious privileges which we have forfeited; to inspire with wisdom and fidelity all who are entrusted with the care of these privileges, and to crown with His blessings all the means of moral and religious improvement with which we are favored.

Extending our concern to the interests of our common country, let us present our supplications in behalf of these United States, entreating that God who has so long bestowed His favors upon them with an unsparring hand, that He will still be pleased to rejoice in their prosperity; to preside in their National Councils; to preserve and bless their Chief Magistrate, and all others who are entrusted with the administration of the General and State Governments, and to grant that a spirit of harmony, order and regard to the interests of morality and religion may pervade our Country, and that the returns, which He receives from us as a Nation, may correspond with our obligations to His goodness.

Embracing in the arms of an expansive benevolence all our fellow-creatures, let us beseech the Universal Parent to look down in mercy upon His great Family; to compassionate their sorrows, supply their wants, and unite them all to Himself and to each other in the bonds of His Holy Religion; to bless and increase the efforts which are made to effect this most desirable object, and to hasten the time when "there shall be one Lord over all the earth," and when all its inhabitants shall unite "with one mind and one mouth" to "glorify God" through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

And the inhabitants of this State are requested to abstain from all labor and recreation inconsistent with the services of that day.

GIVEN at the Council Chamber in Portland, the third day of October, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-three; and in the forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States of America.

ALBION K. PARRIS.

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